

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-15 are pending in the present application. The Abstract has been objected to. Claim 4 has been rejected as indefinite under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-15 have been rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as anticipated by US Pat No 4,418,447 to Ziolkowski.

By way of the present amendments, the Abstract has been corrected, and claim 4 as well as the Specification have been amended to correct a minor typographical error in order to comply with § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to more clearly identify the subject matter being claimed. No new matter is hereby introduced.

Objection to Abstract

The Abstract has been amended to correct the formalities identified by Examiner. Specifically, various implied statements and legal phraseology have been deleted. Because the grounds for the objection are believed to be overcome, Applicant requests that the same be withdrawn.

Claim Rejection under 35 USC § 112

Claim 4 has been rejected as indefinite under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph. Claim 4, as amended herein, is believed to be definite and to comply with the definiteness requirement. Applicant has added the word "other", the same having been inadvertently omitted, between "brought into contact with each...during" in the rejected clause of claim 4, and in the Specification at paragraph [0005]. Having fully addressed the § 112 rejection, Applicant respectfully requests that the same be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 1-15 have been rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as anticipated by US Pat No 4,418,447 to Ziolkowski.

Claim 1, as amended herein, requires the steps of moving the pressing members toward each other, moving the pressing members in the opposite direction, and moving the cutting members toward each other. Ziolkko does not teach these limitations. As Examiner notes, at Fig. 6, lower and upper surfaces 61, 62 of forming arms 34 "are moved further apart than they were in figure 5". However, it is clear from Ziolkko figs. 4-6 that the movement to which Examiner refers is in a single direction, i.e. forming arms 34 move toward one another (shown in fig. 4), meet (fig. 5) and eventually overlap (fig. 6). Ziolkko does not move the pressing members in the opposite direction. Claims 2-6 each depend from amended claim 1.

Claim 7, as amended herein, requires that "the paired cutting member and pressing member are situated on individual arms located on opposite sides of the sausage strand to be separated." Ziolkko does not teach this limitation, disclosing instead forming arms having lower and upper surfaces 61, 62 (identified by Examiner as pressing members) and a slot 64 "formed at the closed end of the opening [V-notch] of each of the forming arms", and a cutting surface 56 "[a]t the end of the slot." See '447 at Col. 5, lines 55-66. Ziolkko therefore does not have 'paired cutting and pressing members situated on individual arms' as claimed. Claims 8-15 each depend from amended claim 7.

CONCLUSION

If any issues remain that may be expeditiously addressed in a telephone interview, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at 515/558-0200.


All fees or extensions of time believed to be due in connection with this response are attached hereto; however,

Application No. 10/581,785
Reply to Office Action dated November 21, 2007

Attorney Docket No. P07009US0

consider this a request for any extension inadvertently omitted,
and charge any additional fees to Deposit Account 50-2098.

Respectfully submitted,



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